

the eighteenth century Letters show a similar need of them in the training of a statesman,

Sir Philip Sidney was considered a ong the Elizabethans a model for courtiers. His youth was ideally spent. Ludovic Bryskett in A Discourse of Civil Life emphasizes this fact, "Sir Philip Sidney who being but seventeen yeeres of age when he began to travell and coming to Paris, where he was ere long sworne Gentleman of the chamber to the French King was so admired among the graver sort of Courtiers, that when they could at any time have him in their companie and conversation, they would be very joyfull, and no lesse delighted with his ready and witty answers, then astonished to hear him speake the French language so well and aptly, having bin so short a while in the country. So was he likewise esteemed in all places else where he came in his travell as well in Germane as in Italie. And the judgement of her Majestie employing him, when he was not yet full twenty two yeeres old, in embassage to congratulate with the Emperor that now is his coming to the Empire may serve for a sufficient prooffe, what excellencie of understanding and what stayedness was in him at those yeeres."¹ Compare this with the ideal, Chesterfield precepts: "Remember that, that whatever knowledge you do not solidly lay the foundation of before you are eighteen, you will never be the master of while you breathe. Knowledge is a comfortable and necessary retreat and shelter for us in an advanced age; and if we do not plant it while young, it will give us no shade when we

1. *Doctrine of English Gentleman*, pp 47 f.